

Refuge to Host Birding Tours

Once again, mid-May brings our local breeding birds back home from migration, and also International Migratory Bird Day! In celebration of International Migratory Bird Day, Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge will be hosting birding tours on Saturday, May 17, at 8:00 AM at the Refuge Headquarters (1 mile south and 2 miles east of Medicine Lake). Come out to the Refuge for a morning devoted to learning about birds, migration, and bird conservation. We will start out with a short orientation, and then tour some of the various bird habitats on the Refuge -- we'll see prairie birds, waterfowl, and colonial-nesting waterbirds. Tours will be followed by refreshments and door prizes back at headquarters around noon. Bring the family, and dress for the outdoors. Binoculars are helpful but not necessary. For more information call Beth Madden at 789-2305 ext. 109.

Like any day of recognition, International Migratory Bird Day exists to focus attention on a valuable resource: the nearly 350 species of migratory birds that travel between nesting habitats in North America and wintering grounds in South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean. More than 225 of these species have been sighted at Medicine Lake Refuge since 1935, and at least 105 of them nest on the Refuge. This past winter, a satellite telemetry project allowed us to track the migration of five White Pelicans from the Refuge breeding colony. Two of them were truly international travelers, spending the winter along the coast of Mexico (one all the way in the southern-most Mexican state of Chiapas!). Two of the others wintered along the Texas gulf coast, and one off the coast of Louisiana. They are just making their way back to Medicine Lake now.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Beth Madden, Medicine Lake Refuge, 406/789-2305 ext 109.